MARVEL COMICS

MARVEL PG 9

EXILES™

A WORLD APART
PART 3 of 3

He's honestly been waiting for this one.

Eagerly.

Since transporting onto this version of Earth...

...one that's been under the rule of the *Skrull Empire* for over a *hundred* years...

...Mimic's had *little* to look forward to.

Being forced to compete in *The Games,* fighting against and alongside every other superhuman on the planet, has proven mostly *joyless.*

Mimic has won *all* of his competitions. It has made him *popular* with the local citizenry.

But not as popular as his *opponent* in this match.

Years ago, the Skrulls considered using *humans* in their war effort against the Kree and set out to create a more *battle-ready* man. Genetic engineering at its *finest.*

They tried and tried with varying degrees of success, but eventually had to *abandon* their plan.

Human beings proved too *willful*-- they couldn't be conditioned to follow orders and definitely couldn't be *trusted.*

But there was *one* great success... and they brought him into The Games.

He is The Game's reigning gladiatorial champion and the Skrulls *love* him.

On this world, they call him *The Captain.*

But where Mimic and his reality-hopping teammates on the *Exiles* hail from...

...he is

Captain America.

SIX STRANGERS, EACH AN X-MAN FROM A DIFFERENT REALITY, BROUGHT TOGETHER TO INSURE THAT LIFE AS WE KNOW IT DOESN'T CEASE TO EXIST! BLINK — TELEPORTER. MIMIC — POWERED BY [illegible] REALITY'S X-MEN. SUNFIRE — MISTRESS OF FLAME. T-BIRD — SUPER-STRENGTH AND SENSES. NOCTURNE — DAUGHTER OF NIGHTCRAWLER. MORPH — SHAPE-CHANGING FUTURE MAN. DESTINED TO FIX THE KINKS IN THE CHAINS OF REALITY, THEY ARE THE EXILES. IN

A WORLD APART

PART TWO OF THREE

He has long been a symbol of the *best* that a hero can be... but *here*— he is the Skrulls' favorite son.

A human who is *better* than all humans.

They see their Captain as one of their *own.*

And it *really* pisses Mimic off.

This match has been eagerly awaited by the Skrull populace. They expect a *great battle.*

Cap has dispatched so many competitors, despite the fact that he doesn't have *conventional powers.*

He is strong, lightning-fast, and *brilliant.* The proverbial *underdog* in a battle of superhumans.

On the other hand, there is *Mimic.*

He has the powers of *five* mutants running through him. Massive strength, agility... he can turn to *steel* or *fly* at superhuman speeds.

Like Cap, Mimic is *also* smart.

He is a *leader* himself.

And he has an *axe* to grind.

Captain America was not destined to be the *poster child* for the ultimate Skrull lapdogs...

...and Mimic was not destined to perform like a *trained monkey.*

So, in his many battles since he's arrived, Calvin has put on *quite* the show.

The crowd *cheers* every time he exhibits one of his abilities.

He has deftly leaped about like the *Beast*...

...transformed his body into organic metal like *Colossus*...

...and, of course, there are the *claws*. The crowd *loves* his Wolverine claws.

But he hasn't given them *everything*.

A smart competitor will always keep an *ace* up his sleeve.

Some fighters can actually lead with both the right *and* the left hand.

Some will play *possum*... which is sort of what *Mimic* does.

You see, he's never used Cyclops's *optic blast* before today.

Match over.

The *championship* bout.

The most widely watched Game event in *Skrull history.*

It's all done.

"Go find some other idiots to beat the crap out of each other for you," Mimic thinks.

Mimic flips the audience the *bird* before they restrain him.

He isn't sure they *understand* the gesture.

He *doesn't care.* It's the best he's felt since he *got* here.

The Home of Reed Richards.

...SO YOU HAVE *NO IDEA* HOW MANY WORLDS EACH OF YOU HAVE TO VISIT BEFORE RETURNING *HOME?* WHAT A *GRUELING* ORDEAL.

I SHOULD *SAY* SO. YOU HAVEN'T BUNKED WITH *T-BIRD* AFTER A FULL MEAL! YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW THE --

MORPH...

TO BE COMPLETELY HONEST, MR. RICHARDS, THIS WORLD OF YOURS HAS BEEN THE MOST *DIFFICULT* REALITY YET.

WITH OUR TEAMMATES TRAPPED AS COMPETITORS IN THE GAMES, AND WITH THE SKRULL TECHNOLOGY BEING AS ADVANCED AS IT IS, IT'S BEEN *IMPOSSIBLE* FOR US TO PENETRATE THEIR HOLDING FACILITIES.

YES, BLINK, I WOULD IMAGINE SO.

I'VE SPENT *YEARS* STUDYING THEIR SYSTEM OF KNOWLEDGE, BUT ONLY FROM AFAR.

I ASSUME *SAM* TOLD YOU OF THE ONE OCCASION WHEN I WAS ABLE TO *COMMANDEER* ANY OF THEIR EQUIPMENT?

YEP, MR. WILSON GAVE US THE FULL STORY.

ALMOST MADE YOURSELF A *"FANTASTIC FOUR"*.

A *WHAT?*

IN MANY REALITIES THAT'S THE NAME OF YOUR *TEAM.*

HOW DO *YOU* KNOW ABOUT THE FF, MISS *LIVED-IN-A-BACKWARDS-MOSTLY-SUPER-DUDELESS-WARZONE?*

MIMIC GAVE ME A *TUTORIAL.* WE SPENT EIGHT WHOLE HOURS GOING OVER SUPERHUMAN HISTORY ON THE ALPHA FLIGHT COMPUTERS.

WOW. HOW *VERY* ROMANTIC. CALVIN'S A *SWELL* DATE. DID YOU FINISH WITH A WRITTEN ESSAY?

REED-- YOU SHOULD *REALLY* LISTEN TO THIS.

SOMETHING I'M PICKING UP HAS GOT A *LOT* OF SKRULL DISPATCHES THROWING A HISSY FIT. I'M HAVING TROUBLE FOLLOWING IT.

WHAT SAM'S BEEN MONITORING HERE IS A *COMMUNICATION DEVICE,* BLINK. IT CATCHES ENERGY CURRENTS AND RECONFIGURES THEM INTO *SOUND.*

WOWZERS!

OUR REED RICHARDS HEADS OUT TO THE NEGATIVE ZONE FOR SCONES, BLINKIE... THIS ONE'S BRAGGING ABOUT RADIO!

ARE YOU EXPECTING THIS CAT TO ACTUALLY HELP US? HE PROBABLY JUST DISCOVERED FIRE LAST MONTH!

MORPH, LOOK AROUND YOU. HE'S MADE ALL THIS FROM NOTHING. HE'S BRILLIANT AND HE'LL HELP.

YEAH. IF HE WANTS T... HELP US DEC... TE OUR CAVE IN THIS CAPTAIN NEMO-ISH THING HE'S GOT GOING ON!

I THINK WE SHOULD LEAVE HERE IMMEDIATELY.

REED, WHAT'S WRONG?

THE SKRULLS HAVE LOST ALL COMMUNICATION OFF-PLANET. THAT'S NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE...

"...AND THEY'RE PANICKING."

IF IT ISN'T RADIATION BURSTS, THEN WHAT IS IT? I WILL KILL THE NEXT ONE WHO TELLS ME THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH DATA!

WHAT ABOUT OUR SHIPS IN ORBIT?

NONE OF THEM HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PINPOINT THE SOURCE OF THE SHUTDOWN EITHER, SIRE.

BUT RENOK-1 ON THE OUTER RIM OF THE GALAXY IS RECEIVING SOME UNUSUAL ENERGY READINGS...

PATCH ME THROUGH TO THEM!

SIRE, THE R... ONGS ARE STILL UNCLEAR... BUT ONE ...ENT A PROBE NEARLY ... HOURS AGO TO ... WE SHOULD ... ISU... ...OMET...

VERY GOOD. PATCH A DIRECT FEED TO CENTRAL. I WANT TO SEE IT, AS WELL.

NOTHING YET...

NO, SIRE-- THERE-- IN THE UPPER QUADRANT!

YES. FIX ON THAT.

MOTHER EMPIRE, PRESERVE US!

IS THAT *HIM*?! *IS IT*?!

YOU CAN WHIMPER AND PRAY THAT IT ISN'T... BUT IT *IS* HIM...

TERRAX THE TAMER! HERALD OF GALACTUS!

B-BUT WHEREVER TERRAX VENTURES-- GALACTUS FOLLOWS!

FULL ALERT! SOUND THE *TANAAK-WAR BEACON!!*

ALL QUADRANTS OF THE ENTIRE COLONY--

"--EVACUATE THE PLANET!!"

THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE, EITHER. THOSE TRANSPORTS HOLD *MILLIONS.*

MAYBE THEY ALL GOT *HOMESICK*... LIKE, ALL OF A SUDDEN. IT *COULD* HAPPEN.

NOT LIKELY, MORPH.

WHY SO *GLUM,* REED? THE EVIL GREEN RIDGED-CHIN ONES ARE GOING *BYE-BYE!* THIS BURG'S REAL ESTATE VALUE JUST *SKYROCKETED!*

YOUNG MAN, I BELIEVE THE SKRULL POPULATION HAS JUST LEFT THE PLANET-- IN *TOTAL...*

...AND I'M WONDERING JUST *WHAT* COULD FRIGHTEN THEM *SO MUCH.*

CLAC-ACK

CLAC CLAC

Son of a gun...

WHAT'S GOING ON?

MAYBE IT'S A MECHANICAL FAILURE...

SHOULD WE JUST STAY PUT?

SCREW THAT. I'M MAK NG A @#$% BREAK FOR IT!

I ALWAYS LIKED YOU, PARKER

THANKS... HEY--HOW'D YOU KNOW MY NAME?

CRACK!

BLAM!

BLAM!

DOOM!

CRACK!

BLAM!

MAKE FOR THE CAVES! FIND COVER!!

AAIEEE!

AAAAAAAAH!

YES!! FLEE! RUN LIKE CHILDREN! RUN LIKE DOGS!

YOU ARE NOT WORTHY TO DIE AT MY HANDS!!

I HAD HEARD SKRULLS OCCUPIED THIS FERTILE ORB. THEY WOULD HAVE PRESENTED A BATTLE WORTHY OF MY NOBILITY AND MARKED THE MOMENTOUSNESS OF TH S OCCASION!

BLINK, GALACTUS IS COMING! YOU KNOW, THE EATER OF WORLDS? DIDN'T MIMIC GET THAT FAR IN YOUR SUPER-BADDIES CLIFF NOTES?

MORPH, WHEN YOU SAY "EATER OF WORLDS", I TAKE THAT AS ONE OF YOUR MANY ATTEMPTS AT LEVITY... CORRECT?

UNFORTUNATELY NOT, REED!

YEAH, SORRY, REED, BUT THIS IS A *BIG* BAD! THE *BIGGEST* OF BIG BADS!

FIRST, THESE INTER-GALACTICALLY-ENHANCED *LEG-BREAKERS* ARE SENT DOWN TO SOFTEN UP THE JOINT...

THEN THE BIG PURPLE G HIMSELF BELLIES UP TO THE BAR AND GULPS DOWN THE ENTIRE PLANET'S ENERGY LIKE A BOWL OF *FRUIT LOOPS!*

BL NK, THE METEOR STORM HAS *CEASED.* S THAT ORD.NARY? WHILE WE HAVE TH S RESPITE, WE SHOULD GET ALL THE NEARBY V LLAGERS TO SAFER GROUND.

SAFER GROUND? STRETCH, HAVEN'T YOU BEEN *LISTENING?* WE'LL NEED TO GET TO *MARS* TO GET OUT OF HARM'S WAY!

SURE, IT MIGHT HAVE STOPPED RAIN NG MINERAL DEPOSITS, BUT THAT WAS JUST THE *OPENING ACT!* I'M SURE TERRAX ONLY STOPPED TO LULL US INTO A *FALSE SENSE* OF *SECURITY.*

I DON'T THINK SO, MORPH. SEEMS HE'S JUST TAKING IN THE *SCENERY...*

Hm. NOW *THIS* IS MORE WORTHY OF MY ATTENTION.

With the exception of the Exiles, the majority of them have been prisoners for *decades.*

Bred to *fight.* Ordered to combat each other or *face death.*

And in their first taste of *true freedom*...

...they find *this* idiot terroriz ing their people.

And that's *all* it took.

...for *heroes* to be born

AAAAAAAAHHHHHHH!!

EXCELLENT! IT IS A *RARITY* TO FIND SUCH *SPORT!* IT WAS FOR OPPORTUNITIES LIKE *THIS* THAT I RELINQUISHED MY CROWN! *HA!*

BA-GOW!!

SO GLAD WE COULD HELP, YOUR ROYAL, STONE-BUTTED-NESS!

CRACK

YES! THAT'S THE SPIRIT, YOU FEEBLE SHE-CATS! DIE WITH *SPIRIT!* DIE WITH BILE *STILL* IN YOUR BELLIES!

OR WE CAN *LIVE* AND YOU CAN LOSE FOUR POUNDS OF *GRANITE* OFF YOUR BACK!

AAAH!

BOOOM!

NOT SO TOUGH WITHOUT THAT STUPID *LANCE*, ARE YOU?

LET'S SEE HOW WELL YOU FARE *WITHOUT* GALACTUS'S TOYS!

MY MASTER HAS EQUIPPED ME WITH *FAR* MORE THAN MERE *TOYS!*

I AM *FUELED* WITH THE POWER OF THE *COSMOS!*

MY THOUGHTS COLLAPSE *MOUNTAINS!*

RESHAPE ROCK!

I AM *TERRAX THE TERRIBLE!*

I AM YOUR *DEATH!*

KO-TACK!!

MAN, WHAT A *CHATTY-CATHY!* YOU'RE ALMOST AS BAD AS *BEN GRIMM!*

Maybe it's something to do with being made outta *rock!*

IMPUDENCE!

NOW I GROW *WEARY!*

TSSSSSSSSST

DEATH WILL COME AT *MY* HANDS!

THOSE OF YOU WHO SURVIVE WILL *ENVY* THE DEAD WHEN MASTER *GALACTUS* FEEDS!

BETTER TO COME BEFORE ME *NOW* AND END IT *QUICK!*

COME FACE DEATH! THERE IS *NO* MORTAL BEING *MIGHTIER* THAN TERRAX!!

BABOOM!

WHU--?!

OH, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT *THAT.*

His name is *Bruce Banner.*

Once, several years ago while testing various weapons systems, the Skrull army *accidentally* exposed a small Northeastern city to massive doses of *gamma radiation.*

All died but *one.*

Here, he is called the *Banner Beast.*

He is the maxi-heavy-weight champion of The Games.

Feared more than admired.

His greatest rival, *Ben Grimm,* was always better liked by the public...

...not that it *matters* anymore.

They are no longer *competitors.*

Just *human beings.*

Long *enslaved...*

...and oddly enough, forced to dispatch their *emancipator.*

WOW. THOSE ARE SOME *ANGRY* SUPER HEROES.

YES. YOU DON'T USUALLY HEAR THOSE KINDS OF *OBSCENITIES* BEING TOSSED AROUND DURING A FIGHT.

YEAH. THAT *POLARIS* CURSES LIKE A *SAILOR.*

A PERFECTLY GOOD BUTT-KICKING GOING ON AND *YOU'RE* JUST STANDING ON THE *SIDELINES?*

CLARICE!

COACH, I'M READY T'GO IN WHENEVER YOU SAY THE WOID!

SO... HOW YOU BEEN?

OH, Y'KNOW... SAME OLD, SAME OLD. BEEN BUSY.

YOU LOOK LIKE *HELL.*

WELL, I HAVE BEEN HITTING THE DANCECLUBS PRETTY HARD...

I'D SAY IT'S SICKENING, BUT I BET IN *TEN MINUTES* HE'S GONNA QUIZ HER ON THE ORIGIN OF THE *INHUMANS...*

The Skrulls fled Earth in less than *three hours.* They took *very little* with them.

Reed Richards's eyes lit up like a child on Christmas morning when he saw the *Skrull labs* he suddenly had access to.

Peter Parker and the Banner Beast also seemed to share in Reed's sudden interest.

The rest, despite the fact of knowing they faced an enemy of *unmeasured power*--

--were oddly *jovial.*

But some *less* than others...

SO, *NOW* WHAT? THE TALLUS TOLD US TO *SAVE THE WORLD...* AND WE KNOW HOW TO SAVE IT...

...*BEAT GALACTUS.*

Y'KNOW, FIGHT A *GOD.*

OH, I DON'T KNOW... I THINK WE'VE GOT A *SHOT.* DOWN THERE ARE SOME OF THE *GREATEST* WARRIORS IN ALL OUR REALITIES.

YEAH. AND THEY'VE BEEN TRAINED IN NOTHING *BUT* BATTLE. THEY'RE AS HARD AS *DIAMONDS...* AND FOR THE FIRST TIME THEY'RE *FREE.*

AND I BET THEY'RE WILLING TO *DIE* TO KEEP THINGS THAT WAY.

HELLO! WE ALMOST GOT BEAT BY *THE HERALD!* AND WHEN THE BIG DUDE ARRIVES, IT AIN'T NO *CLAMBAKE,* KIDDIES!

BUT WE WENT IN AGAINST TERRAX WITHOUT PLAN OR STRATEGY. THIS TIME WILL BE *DIFFERENT.*

IS THAT RIGHT, OH FEARLESS LEADERS? WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A *PLAN?*

SURE.

YEP.

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE.

I WAS *SO* GONNA SAY THAT.

TOO SLOW.

NEXT: *A WORLD APART* concludes!